



Lithgow Environment Group Inc.
PO Box 3081 Bowenfels, NSW 2790, ABN 23395145080
Preserving the Balance of Nature

Parliament of New South Wales,

Legislative Assembly Committee on Environment & Planning

Attention:

Chair: Alex Greenwich (IND, LA Member)

**Deputy
Chair:** Felicity Wilson (LIB, LA Member)

Members: Anoulack Chanthivong (ALP, LA Member)
James Griffin (LIB, LA Member)
Nathaniel Smith (LIB, LA Member)

Submission: Sustainability of energy supply and resources in NSW

Thank you for allowing Lithgow Environment Group Inc to provide information to this committee and to hear our transition story with our great city that is in rapid decline and our needs to continue to thrive into the future.

"We can choose new industry that creates new jobs that does not compromise our natural areas, agricultural lands, water security, health or the social fabric of our regions".

Lithgow is well known for its contribution to not only the state, national and internationally with history for over 100 years with coal mining and power generation. But this has been at a cost at a local level, with the destruction of our ancient natural areas, contaminated mining sites, loss of quality and quantity of surface water. Lithgow, the headwaters for numerous catchments, including Sydney water catchment and to the Murray-Darling.

Lithgow is well known also for its integrity, strength and progressive thinking. We need the support of our governments to be able to survive and gain stability in a declining city. But there is hope if we achieve a transition plan now with the opportunities now presenting with renewable energy across the nation. Providing cleaner energy, less emissions, reducing loss of natural areas, Endangered Ecological Communities, native Flora and Fauna, loss of surface and ground water, Equally the provision of retraining to existing coal and power generation workers and training for our younger generation.

The fabric of our community is weakening with the insecurity of future with now privatised power generation and coal mining. It is common talk with locals that either of those industries can pack up and leave at any time. One must consider with EnergyAustralia as with the other 4 coal fired powered generators of the state are reducing the profitability margin with the current level of renewables producing energy and increasing every day. Yes, we hear that coal is here for a time yet, but there is no timeline guarantee for Lithgow with renewables gaining traction across Australia with funded clean energy projects from both state and federal agencies and private enterprise. The time is now to support our community with diversification to renewable energy equally to other [sustainable economic streams – Destination Pagoda economic tourist plan](#). Yes currently there has been injection of ARENA feasibility funding to burn specific [RDF](#) rubbish at Mt Piper Power Station, this may well be reducing Sydneys' landfill/emissions but is not reducing emissions here it is increasing emissions, increasing toxic residuals – top and bottom ash which will be placed in the current fly ash repository which currently stands around 20 million tonnes of fly ash, with a current study, [detection of contamination of groundwater](#). The location of Mt Piper Power Station at Blackmans Flat is known as a [cumulative impacted zone](#). In addition to 20 million + tonnes of fly ash at Mt Piper Power Station, average of 300,000 tonnes of exposed coal on site, bordering property

Centennial with Western Coal Services washery with a capacity to hold over 800,000 tonnes of exposed coal. Energy Australia owns existing coal mining leases in Blackmans Flat area, Centennial holds mining lease for Nuebeck Creek Open Cut, Castlereagh Coal Cullen Bullen– open cut mines (Invincible and Cullen Valley). All of those mining lease have approval to open cut Ben Bullen State Forest.

Lithgow needs to reduce its environmental impacts with a mandatory sustainable economic clean energy plan with one example (see link above Destination Pagoda Economic Tourist Plan).

Lithgow needs to reduce its current emissions to reduce the health impacts on its community from emissions from coal fired power generation and exposed coal mining areas

Lithgow needs to reduce unsustainable loss of surface and groundwater due to coal fired power station and coal mining.

Lithgow needs to utilise its untapped natural areas assets – Eco Tourism. [Geo Tourism](#)

Lithgow can plan with innovative transition with clean renewable energy:

- Funding to support such projects could prevail with pumped hydro dam to dam with elevated escarpments of over 300 metres drop into Wolgan Valley and closely connected to existing grid at decommissioned Wallerawang Power Station. Reducing the requirements of current water needed for both power generation and coal washeries.
- Funding to support innovative training centre for all renewable applications including supercharge stations on site training with the opportunities to train, local, neighbouring communities, state, national and international.
- Funding to support solar/wind projects with vast areas of agricultural land which will still allow for agricultural purposes, already shown in many existing renewable projects. So, no loss of agricultural land, but increase in diversification with a multifaceted economic benefit. This could be enhanced with the above dot points, training, producing renewable energy, farming, hot house food production. A new university degree formulated with multifaceted levels which would include, renewable energy production varied infrastructure applications, hot house food production, grazing to enhance future directions with sustainable farming.

Please see attached just a few reports/information that relates to impacts on land, water, health and community in general.

I am happy to discuss if any further information if required. 0419921092.

Your truly

Julie Favell

Natural Areas Liaison Officer/Renewable Transition Liaison Officer

Lithgow Environment Group Inc.

<http://www.lithgowenvironment.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/LithgowEnvironment/>

https://twitter.com/info_leg

Ref:

https://www.envirojustice.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Ewald_B_2018_The_health_burden_of_fine_particle_pollution_from_electricity_generation_in_NSW.pdf

http://www.lithgowenvironment.org/uploads/2/0/4/1/20411841/leg_submission_-_angus_place_mod_5_-_8_june_2018_final.pdf

<https://www.habitatadvocate.com.au/?tag=enforceable-undertaking>

https://bluemountains.org.au/documents/pastcampaigns/benson_and_baird_2012_npss_paper.pdf